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Musical Science, Literature, and Intelligence.

“Ἡ μὲν ἁρμονία ἀόρατόν τι καὶ ἀσώματον,
καὶ πάγκαλόν τι καὶ θεῖόν ἐστιν.”

PLAT. *Phædo*. sec. ααυvi.

Music is a something viewless and incorporeal,
an all-gracious and a God-like thing.

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THE PORTAMENTO DI VOCE.

THE *portamento di voce* is very generally used in speaking of singing and in teaching it: and it forms, most certainly, one of the most important parts of instruction; and, if perfectly executed, is one of the greatest, most expressive, and touching beauties in the art of singing. Yet the *portamento* is very generally misunderstood, even by the teachers of music; and, in fact, it can better be perceived by the ear than explained by words.

Haeser, a very eminent professor of singing, gives the best explanation of it, which is as follows: “*portamento* is not only the sustaining of the voice in its full *metal* (*timbre* in French), through all its possible shades of high or low, and forte or piano, but also, and this latter in particular, the blending and melting of one tone into another; which is most perfect when every tone, in perfect equality of strength, fullness and roundness, flows on, as it were, into the next, thus being most intimately combined with it.”

The human voice alone is capable of producing the *portamento* perfectly; and to this circumstance it owes greatly the superiority of expression which it enjoys over instruments. Next to the human voice stand the wind instruments in this pre-eminence, the tone being produced from them by breathing. Stringed instruments are still less capable of producing the *portamento*, and keyed instruments not at all.

The *portamento* must be well distinguished from the disgustingly ill-toned *drawing* of one into another; which is like the sound produced on stringed instruments by slowly running down the finger on the same string. This is no *portamento*, although it is by many singers practised as such and called so. It is, on the contrary, a fault producing a disagreeable drawing and howling (*sur-*

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lare, or delicately termed *maniera affettata, smorfiosa*, by the Italians). It might be permitted in piano and soft parts, between two tones of only half a tone's distance, and then only by soprano voices. In lower voices the effect is under all circumstances disagreeable.

To study the *portamento* will only be of use after the singer has his head and chest registers of the voice, in their equality and union, completely in his power. Good exercises for it are scales in A and E major; first in long notes, and only gradually in shorter ones: and after that, pieces which are suitable for it by their time (*largo, adagio, cantabile, &c.*) and by their character (more properly song than declamation). The upward scale gives a better exercise than the downward scale, experience showing that most voices go easier downwards than upwards, and the downward scale also tending to create the fault of *drawing* the tones into each other.

A good *portamento* gives an inexpressible charm to singing; but it would produce monotony and effeminacy if constantly used. The singer would therefore do well to practise alternately uniting and sustaining the notes in the *portamento*, and then to take them up fresh without binding them thus closely.

The greatest art in the *portamento* is, to make the transition of the tones into each other so imperceptible, that they appear to be bound together, and yet so plain and distinct, that they appear at the same time to be *staccato*.

MUSICAL BIOGRAPHY.—No. I.

DR. CALLCOTT.

DR. JOHN WALL CALLCOTT was born in 1766, and commenced his musical career at the age of eighteen, when he appeared as candidate for the prize given by the Catch Club. In 1786 he was admitted an honorary member of that club, on which occasion he sent in, as a candidate for prizes, nearly a hundred compositions; a proceeding which produced the natural consequence of a resolution by the club, limiting the number of compositions from any one candidate to twelve. Callcott was rather unreasonably offended at this, and declined, for a time, to write for the club; but shortly after he sent in twelve pieces, the full number allowed, and gained all the prizes of the year—a circumstance unprecedented in the history of the club. From that time till 1793, when the Catch Club ceased to give prizes, he continued regularly to send in compositions to the club, and gained a great number of medals.

In 1787 he joined Dr. Arnold and a number of gentlemen, both professional and amateurs, in founding the Glee Club, which held its first meeting at the Newcastle Coffee-house, on the 22nd December of that year.

In 1800 he obtained the degree of doctor of music at Oxford. Soon after this time his strength, both of body and mind began to give way under the excessive labour to which he subjected himself. He was not only an indefatigable composer but an industrious teacher; and he had also engaged in preparing a musical dictionary. Finding himself, however, unable to accomplish an undertaking of such magnitude, he wrote his "Musical Grammar;" a little work, in which the rudiments of music are clearly and judiciously expounded. This was his last work of any consequence. His faculties sank under such unremitting exertions; and he spent several years in a state of entire seclusion. His mind afterwards recovered its tone, and he was again able to mingle in society and resume his professional pursuits. But this only lasted for a short while; he relapsed into mental imbecility, and died on the 15th of May, 1821.

In the unwearied activity of his mind, and his ardour in the pursuit of general

knowledge, Dr. Callcott seems strongly to have resembled Mr. Webbe. When scarcely more than fourteen years of age the passion for various pursuits for which he was afterwards so remarkable showed itself strongly. His musical studies appear to have been conducted with almost unremitting diligence; yet at intervals he continued to improve himself in classical learning, and began to cultivate an acquaintance with the French and Italian languages. Indeed, to attain a general knowledge of languages was with him a great object at all times; and he was even induced to attempt the Hebrew and the Syriac. Algebra and mathematics also occupied his attention; and it is, perhaps, to the gratification which these studies afforded him, that we may attribute the taste for abstract musical science which he afterwards displayed.

His musical pursuits were at first of a varied kind, but he early devoted himself to the particular study of glee writing. Even when he had become one of the most popular glee composers of the day, he had acquired little skill in the management of an orchestra. It is related, that having about this time written a song with full accompaniments, he presented it to Stephen Storace, with a request that he would examine it, and draw his pencil through such parts as did not please him. Stephen, who was one of the most unceremonious of beings, looked over the score, then drawing his pencil through the whole, he thrust it into the author's hands, with the single exclamation, "There!"

Following his constant desire for improvement, he received some instructions from Haydn during that great master's residence in England, though the numerous avocations which occupied him in turn must have made it impossible for him to devote much time to any one branch of musical science. His efforts for general improvement were prodigious, even at this period of his life; and they excited the surprise and even the alarm of his friends; an alarm which eventually proved to be well founded. His constitution, though not robust, was naturally good; but it was not in human strength to withstand the demands he made on it. He not only denied himself those intervals of relaxation which every one finds necessary, but even during his meals he was occupied in reading; and, what was still more detrimental to his health, he sought by various means to abridge his hours of sleep. Indeed, the time he allowed himself for repose was so exceedingly short, that, according to the opinion of a well-informed medical friend, it was of itself sufficient to lay the foundation of that irritability of the nervous system which subsequently produced such distressing consequences.

It was while he received lessons from Haydn that he composed his well-known scene from Thomson's hymn, "These as they change." The accompaniments to the recitative in that scene are among his best instrumental productions, and prove the advantages he derived from studying under so profound a judge of orchestral effect. It was also from frequent conversations with that wonderful composer, and from a diligent consideration of some of his works, that Callcott first became inclined to employ himself principally in compositions of a smaller number of parts. Whoever looks attentively over the scores of those symphonies which Haydn wrote before his visit to this country, must observe that the great effects produced by them are not at all dependent on complicated harmony. On the contrary, they must be pronounced *thin*, in comparison with the symphonies of Mozart and Beethoven: their charm, therefore, consists in the beauty of the cantilena, in the admirable conduct of the subject and modulation, and in the exquisite employment of every instrument introduced. Struck with this, Callcott conceived that the finest vocal compositions would be found in three, or at the most four parts. In this opinion he was much confirmed by the success of his glees, "Peace to the souls of the heroes," "Who comes so dark from ocean's roar?" "The friar of orders gray," &c., and henceforward, with a very few exceptions, he confined himself to that number.

Callcott divides with Webbe the claim to pre-eminence in the branch of the musical art to which they devoted themselves. Some of his glees are slight, and appear to have been hastily written; others have been evidently produced when his imagination was not very active; and there is a similarity in the construction of many of his compositions which approaches to mannerism. But all this must be the case with every one who writes so much and so rapidly as Dr. Callcott

has done. A great number of his glees, the produce of his happier moments, are worthy of all the admiration they have received; and of the forty-eight glees selected from among his voluminous works, by Mr. Horsley, and published, together with a number of catches and canons, in 1824, there is not one that does not bear the impress of the author's genius.

Dr. Callcott's masterpiece is undoubtedly the celebrated glee, "O snatch me swift from these tempestuous scenes;" a composition, indeed, which probably has not been surpassed by any work of its class. In its lofty and devotional character it resembles Webbe's "When winds breathe soft;" and there is a curious resemblance, too, in the circumstances which gave rise to these two productions. Webbe obtained the words of his glee from happening, one morning, to look at the piece of paper which covered some article brought in by his servant from the grocer's shop; and the author of these magnificent words has never been known. Callcott found the words of "O snatch me swift" in an odd volume of poems which he bought at a book-stall on his way to the theatre, in order to pass his time while waiting for the commencement of the play; and these beautiful but anonymous verses inspired the composer with his noblest conceptions. The whole of the glee is grand and impressive; and the fugue on two subjects with which it concludes, shows how, in the hands of genius, the resources of counterpoint can be made subservient to the purposes of effect and poetical expression. Besides this magnificent glee, the following may be mentioned as possessing peculiar excellence: "Peace to the souls of the heroes," "Who comes so dark," "Queen of the valley," "The red-cross knight," "In the lonely vale of streams," "Are the white hours for ever fled," "O voi che sospirate," "The friar of orders gray," and "The May-fly." Dr. Callcott also composed two or three songs, or cantatas, with orchestral accompaniments; one of which, "These as they change," has already been mentioned, and his "Angel of life," written for the celebrated Bartleman, enjoyed unbounded popularity in the days of that unrivalled bass-singer, but has rarely been attempted by any of his successors.

THE TRIALS OF GENIUS.

It was just about the time of the carnival, when a young man was sitting meditating in the parlour of a public hotel in the splendid city of Florence. The room was at this time, being afternoon, deserted by everybody else, except a waiter, who had dropped asleep over a paper which he had been reading. The stranger appeared not yet to have passed twenty-five years of age; and, to judge by his features and his light curly hair, he was not born on that side of the Alps. He thought of his past life. Born in the far distant north, he had enjoyed from his cradle but few of the sunbeams of fortune, and his fairest dreams had never been realized. He was brought up in want and poverty, and art alone had smiled consoling upon him; until he had fully concluded to yield entirely to his passion for it, in order possibly to gain by it a better position in the world. From that time, every moment that was disengaged was used with the greatest perseverance to acquire the necessary skill, to contemplate the nature of the art, and to examine and study its old and new masters. At last the artist was fully cultivated in the man; he was satisfied with his performances, and had begun to enter the lists as an artist. But, instead of earning the triumphal wreaths of acknowledged merit, his head had only to bear the thorny crowns of neglect and indifference. He found that the crowd generally is attracted only by a celebrated name, by external circumstances, never going deeper into the real kernel, and pre-judging and condemning where these outward shells are wanting: he had learned to his astonishment, that the majority of critics and connoisseurs only moved dexterously in shallow commonplace terms; and, when driven beyond their depth, followed, without rudder, compass, or sail, the caprice of every light breeze they encountered.

But all this had not sufficed to extinguish the ardour of the youthful heart, nor even to check it: he had felt deeply, that the mind of every artist has to work its way through the miseries and disappointments of life, and that it has

to strengthen itself by overcoming these difficulties. Here, in our narrow city-life they cannot take any other measure; but without, in the great world, there all these small considerations will drop off: in the large capitals of the world, and above all, in its first capital, Paris, genius will only have to show itself, to be acknowledged according to its merits, without being asked for name, or school, or heaven knows what other unessential trifles. This idea grew to conviction the more he pondered over it. He considered the many stars that had dazzled the world, like meteors, with their brilliancy; he traced their first appearance, and found that from that city only they had risen over the people. He was decided; and collecting together what was left him of the goods of this world, he had wandered to that country, to that city, in which his years of labour and study were to be rewarded: in which all his ambitious hopes were to be fulfilled. He had wandered over the French country, and had been attracted by the gay, witty mind of the inhabitants; but began, nevertheless, to feel, that real love for the art was here much rarer than in his northern home; nay, even that there was no independent judgment here, but that the capital spoke for the whole country.

Thus his heart had grown heavier every step that he made towards Paris; and when at last he had come in sight of this ocean of buildings, when he lost himself from Mount Calvary in this endless knot of streets, a feeling almost of annihilation had crept over him. This feeling of solitariness, of standing alone amidst that immense crowd, together with all his evil forebodings, had, however, soon given way to his youthful buoyancy. He had mixed with the crowd, had made calls, and attempted to prepare the way for his exhibition. But he had arrived in that emporium at the most unfortunate period: for at the same time, that awful scourge, the Asiatic cholera, had come over the sea, and begun its dreadful ravages. It claimed its victims from among all ranks of society; and while the more affluent inhabitants retired to the country, or secluded themselves from the crowd, the rabble rioted furiously through the city, excited by rumours of poisoned wells, and threatening murder and pillage; the hearse rolled continually through the streets, now surrounded by furious masks, and then anxiously shunned by miserably-distorted faces, bearing those the destroying angel had slain, to one dark common grave.

Under these circumstances the young artist's courage and patience had to bear up against many heavy disappointments. At one place the epidemic had cramped or killed all spirit of enterprise, all the feeling for the fine arts; at another there had been so many claimants, that they had their hands full, and could not promote his wishes, however much they might have wished to do so. Who does not know those fine French phrases which raise the expectations to the utmost, and then suddenly damp every hope with an unexpectedly annexed "but!" Moreover, there were so many stars of the first magnitude in Paris, that the new comer could not make his light penetrate their brilliancy. In one circle Bellini reigned triumphant; in another Auber held undisputed sway; a great crowd would hear of nobody but Meyerbeer, who was about to let loose his devil; but violinists, above all, there were so many, from de Beriot, who had carried home the charming Malibran, down to the youngest pupils of the Conservatory, that the foreign artist saw one of his fair hopes fade after another. But as, according to the parable of holy writ, continued praying gains the consent even of unjust judges, he also at last succeeded, and the concert-saloon was allowed him for a trial; nay, even an orchestra was put at his disposition. The saloon was, on the appointed evening, much against his expectation, very well filled; partly because the people wanted diversion in these heavy times, and partly because the strange, foreign, northern name that had been pasted in large capitals on the walls in the streets, and announced in the newspapers, had excited curiosity among the novelty-seeking Parisians. Many of those present were more spectators than listeners: they had expected to behold in the northerner a giant wrapped in furs; while others demanded something still more wonderful: in short, the saloon had been full, but the applause, the satisfaction, had not been so general as the young artist had anticipated. Instead of all the extraordinary things they had expected, they found only a light-haired young man, who, in his

manner, reminded one of the German, but who, for the rest, in dress and external appearance, was altogether like a well-bred Parisian: his art was that of many other artists: Paganini, de Beriot, and others had played as well, or better; and in these times it was not worth while to trouble themselves much about the difference that there might be in his playing, or inquire, of a connoisseur, into the merits of it. The audience left the concert, as is so often the case, altogether indifferent; nay, even partly vexed that it had not been decidedly bad, so that they might have amused themselves decently by getting up a general hiss.

The young northerner had, notwithstanding his disappointment, at least the consolation of an unexpectedly rich receipt, with which he speedily travelled south to escape the city, which now, with its infected air and its shallow connoisseurs, oppressed him. Italy, the land of art, had appeared to him always a paradise: here, in the birthplace of the art of music, he thought he should best succeed, and take from this country that stand in his art on the whole continent, which he felt he merited. Hesperia's fields opened to him like an enchanted world; but its inhabitants proved as far below his anticipations, as its country did above them. He had been through the country; he had seen and heard much; nay, he had improved: but yet he had not gained the acknowledgment of his talents: he had exhausted his means, and he had now been, unemployed, for several weeks in Tuscany's capital. In spite of all his endeavours no theatre would give him an engagement, no voice would rise up in his favour; and yet he must see the people, half crazy, press forward, nay, fighting for tickets, day after day, to hear one and the same opera, of which he had heard enough in one representation, and in which only a few over-sentimental pieces, a few roudes, were new; the rest being made up of commonplace trash, in such an unscientific, pupil-like manner, as if the whole was the work of a common musician, and not of a highly-praised Italian maestro.

All the disappointments which he had experienced in his short artistical career now rose vividly before his mind. France and Italy, on whose ardent, easily-excited inhabitants he had founded all his ambitious plans, had disappointed him and not acknowledged his talent: all his splendid air-castles had vanished, like the fairy Morgana's phantoms, when he had approached them. What was now left to him? Only cold Germany, which, from constant doubts and considerations, seems to have no independent judgment at all, but always to wait and hesitate until its neighbours have given their vote, and which honours its own great spirits only when they have been acknowledged in foreign countries. His heart sunk more and more within him; and he began to doubt whether the innate voice that had called him to the artist's avocation, had been true; whether he had not deceived himself upon his talents and gifts. He imagined he would have done better to choose another social profession; nay, he thought it was not yet too late; this step was still possible, nay, beneficial and necessary. His heart bled when he thought of the dreams of his former years; when the expectations and hopes which he had only a few months before entertained, rose like phantoms before his mind: but, once convinced of the necessity of ending this state of constant suspense and uncertainty, he boldly bent his thoughts on this important step, which would a few weeks before have appeared to him death and perdition. Might not noble art remain his solace? Might she not grace his associations, and throw her splendour even around the obscurest life, whatever be his future lot, or wherever he would find his resting-place and his sphere of action? The more he considered this idea, and the more he thought of his situation, the more comfortable he felt himself, and the more desirable he imagined his future life. Whereas he had formerly revelled in imagined victories of art, he now relished the quiet enjoyment of it, which he was depicting to himself; and his face assumed, under his meditations, a much more tranquil and light-hearted aspect than it had shown at first.

Thus losing himself more and more in his new thoughts, he left entirely unnoticed the entrance of two persons, who were conversing very eagerly near his philosophic corner. They were a lady and gentleman; the latter appearing evidently to be the master of the hotel, and exhausting himself in the humblest

civilities to the lady, who seemed not to be in the best humour. The lady had a lofty and slender figure; her features were beautiful and regular, with an expression of heroic power which was in very good keeping with that delicate paleness that was diffused over the soft rounding of her cheeks. Her mouth formed the fairest curve, and her lips were the finest threads of carnation; her forehead and nose spoke of British decision of character, while the dark tresses intimated a southern parentage.

"I do not know," said the lady, in the best Tuscan dialect, as though she had been born and bred in Florence, "I do not know how to extricate myself from this embarrassment. Our concert is announced; all the boxes, all the tickets for the pit, are sold; carriages and pedestrians are already going in crowds to the theatre, and it will be too late to postpone the concert!"

"Your ladyship's husband is not able then to go down?" replied mine host: "I hope there is no danger: I thought the physician assured me—"

"There is not the least danger in his fever, but he must keep his chamber for a few days, and I am in despair. Our concert is based upon the appearance of my husband. I can sing at most but three pieces, and only those which I have rehearsed with the orchestra. Where shall I get pieces to fill up the remainder? Can you give me any advice?"

"Hem!" said the host, "advice! you want a violin-player! Well, signorina, there are plenty of them in our city: believe me, I know something of the noble art of music: Paganini staid here; Viotti too, that noble Piedmontese; and, as my grandfather used to tell me, Tartini, also, that prince of fiddlers, in his time has honoured this house with his presence. But to return to our object; we need not go so far for a violin player; there is one in this house who could take the place of signorina's husband."

"Here is somebody in this hotel who could take his place! That sounds strange: I have not heard of any distinguished stranger artist here," replied the lady, shaking her head.

"The young man lives in a back room of the third story, therefore but few hear him: but I have listened when he locked himself up with his violin: one would think he heard the most tender converse between betrothed lovers."

"That appears to me more and more incredible: give me at least his name; is it French or Italian?"

"That is the difficulty. I might undertake to pronounce a French name, by speaking it through the nose; but this young man must be from a very distant country; for his name sounds so strange, so unpronounceable, that it must first be made fit for the tongue to pronounce: there is a little German and a little English in it, and yet it is from neither country. In short, I have forgotten it; but no matter; it is the man, not the name, we want."

"Well," said the lady, jestingly, "I am curious to make the acquaintance of this wonderful man, and to ascertain whether he will undertake to supply de Beriot's place."

"I am at your service," cried the host, turning round to call the desired person; but just when the lady was about to stop his rash proceedings, the dreamer himself rose from his corner, and was immediately accosted by the host. "Excuse me, my northern gentleman," said he; "this lady here, the illustrious Malibran, is in despair on account of the indisposition of her husband, who intended to assist her concert this evening by his unequalled performance on the violin; so I thought you might take his part and help the lady."

"Pardon," interrupted the lady, "that our complaisant friend here troubles you with such an indiscreet request; he is an amateur, but too little a connoisseur, or he would not have thought of helping me out of my embarrassment in this unreasonable manner."

(To be continued.)

ON ARRANGEMENTS.

In order that a piece of music may appear and be estimated as a work of art, and especially according to the conception of its author, it can only be presented in exactly the same form and with the same attendant circumstances in which the composer conceived it. On this form and these circumstances, indeed, the individuality and absolute as well as relative merits of the piece are founded. In every essential alteration, the intended impression of the whole, as well as the particular impression of the parts, is necessarily weakened, and may be altogether destroyed. The more will this be the case, according as the composer has chosen the means of attaining his object the more justly and with the greater talent.

We set great value on having an opera or any other large composition conducted at its performance by its composer; or, where this is impossible, we make great account of having the time of each movement, as designed by the author, marked by a chronometer or metronome, that we may the better catch the composer's idea.

It would not be easy to imagine an arrangement of a duett or trio into a whole opera; though it would be more meritorious to make something of nothing, than nothing of something.

These premises are so self-evident and so generally understood, that we should think no honest musician would undertake to turn an opera like Mozart's *Magic Flute*, or Cherubini's *Faniska*, and others, into duetts for two flutes, or two violins, or one guitar, the text or words being thrown away.

There are certainly some kinds of arrangements which, though they unavoidably weaken the full effect of the piece, are yet useful and even important; as in cases where the work, in its original form, would be but little known, and perhaps not at all. We refer to arrangements of operas for the pianoforte, and of symphonies for a smaller orchestra. Such works are, in this form, accessible to a far greater number of the lovers of good music; and without them they could only be enjoyed by those who lived in the largest cities. Neither do they, in this way, altogether lose their original character.

But to arrange everything off-hand, into every possible shape, and for every possible instrument, ought no longer to be tolerated. Such arrangements often exhibit a piece only in caricature. Think of arranging *Macbeth*, the *Merchant of Venice*, or the *School for Scandal*, for four or two or one speaker; every one sees that the character of these plays is lost. The different personages in a drama are not more necessary to the development and understanding of the whole, than are the different voices and instruments in their proper relations in a large musical composition. Our readers probably recollect the story of the travelling manager who advertised to perform Shakspeare's tragedy of *Hamlet* in one of the large country towns; and when the curtain rose, informed his audience that, in consequence of the sudden indisposition of the principal actor, the piece would go on with the trifling omission of the character of *Hamlet*—the application to this matter of arrangements is not inappropriate.

ON THE PRINCIPLES OF TASTE.

BY JAMES RUSH, M.D.

THE accurate sciences and the fine arts, with great inadvertence to the pretensions of each, have been set in opposition to each other by wider antithesis than is justified on near examination. The careless argument asserts that taste is a variable feeling, and has no rule of beauty in the uses of form, colour, and sound. If the general agreement among men of equal education in the arts approximates towards the meaning of a standard, there is not full reason for the contrariety decreed to those departments of knowledge. Who does not know that particular excellencies of the painter, poet, architect, orator, statuary, composer, landscape improver, and actor have reached the spring of congenial perception in

those who reflect upon their works, and draw therefrom an ever-during approbation?

Though future times will probably break down the mischievous distinction which assigns a different kind of logic to different departments of knowledge, and will subject all nature and art equally to the simple and sufficient process of observation and classification, still it may well seem to the present age, that between the perception of beauty in the arts and of the accidents of mathematical quantity there is little similarity. But I am aware of no other reason for the acknowledged certainty of the relationship of magnitude and numbers, than the general consent of those who inquire into them. We agree upon them, because we all use the same rigid rule of observation (call it reasoning here if you will), and because we can embrace and contemplate all the premises which are involved in a conclusion. It is trifling to urge, that the properties of a conic section would still exist as truths, though they might never be demonstrated. Truth is a term invented for the use of a percipient being; and the question before us is of knowledge, not of notions. Otherwise we might, with like proof of an eternal rule of taste, assert that the proportions of a Greek column existed unheaven and unseen in the quarry—like that conceit of old, which declared that the Venus of Cnidos was not the work of Praxiteles, since nature herself had concreted the boundary surface of its beauty; the artist having only produced the fragments of his chisel and the dust of his file. I speak here against an unlimited assertion of the variableness of the principles of taste, and the apathy evinced by a neglect to discover or establish them; not of an equality in precision between them and the truths of the exact sciences.

If I have rightly considered the disputed subject of taste, its controversies consist of the differences of the ignorant with artists and with one another; and rarely of the variance of educated and intelligent artists among themselves. If the latter fail in settling their authority, or in extending the benefits of their principles over the presumptuous part of the multitude, it does not prove that a standard does not belong to the arts, or that artists do not enjoy the delightful effects of it, but that there is more assuming vanity in the world than fellowship in knowledge. Silence or modest inquiry is the duty of the ignorant; and where neither is performed, nature seems, in their cases, to have departed from her plan in animal creation, by not withholding from them the litigious faculty of speech.

These differences cannot, of themselves, call in question the authority of principles in the arts. Most of the phenomena of cause and effect in natural philosophy, are as obvious as proofs of the properties of curves by the most exact calculus. Still pretenders, in every condition of life, are constantly trespassing within the bounds of this science by the absurdity of their reasonings with each other on points of natural knowledge. Knaves exhibit their perpetual motions, and the whole host of learned and unlearned credulity cannot change the influence of those principles which at once determine the impossibility.

There is a wholesome kind of conviction on the minds of fools, which forces them to confess their want of knowledge in mathematics if they have not studied that science. But taste, say they, is natural, therefore every one should have his own. It is true, every one knows what will please himself in his ignorance; but the wise only know what will please the intelligent in their education.

DESCRIPTION OF A CONSERVATORIO.

THIS morning I went with young Oliver to his Conservatorio, and visited all the rooms where the boys practice, sleep, and eat. On the first flight of stairs was a trumpeter, screaming upon his instrument till he was ready to burst; on the second was a French horn, bellowing in the same manner. In the common practising room there was a *Dutch concert* consisting of seven or eight harpsichords, more than as many violins, and several voices, all performing different things and in different keys: other boys were writing in the same room; but it being holiday time, many were absent who usually study and practice there together.

The jumbling them all together in this manner may be convenient for the

house, and may teach the boys to attend to their own parts with firmness, whatever else may be going forward at the same time: it may likewise give them force, by obliging them to play loud in order to hear themselves; but in the midst of such jargon and continued dissonance, it is wholly impossible to give any kind of polish or finishing to their performance: hence the slovenly coarseness so remarkable in their public exhibitions; and the total want of taste, neatness, and expression in all these young musicians, till they have acquired them elsewhere.

The beds, which are in the same room, serve for seats to the harpsichords and other instruments. Out of thirty or forty boys who were practising, I could discover but two that were playing the same piece: some of those who were practising on the violin seemed to have a great deal of hand. The violoncellos practise in another room: and the flutes, hautboys, and other wind instruments, in a third, except the trumpets and horns, which are obliged to fag, either on the stairs, or on the top of the house.

The only vacation in these schools, in the whole year, is in autumn, and that for a few days only: during the winter, the boys rise two hours before it is light, from which time they continue their exercise, an hour and a half at dinner excepted, till eight o'clock at night; and this constant perseverance for a number of years, with genius and good teaching, must produce great musicians.—*Dr. Burney's Tour in Italy.*

CORRESPONDENCE.

A NATIONAL OPERA.

To the Editor of the Musical World.

SIR—I trust the few observations I have to make on the subject of a grand National Opera will be received with the same hearty good feeling in which they are meant, and not in the wrangling spirit that has pervaded your correspondence of late. I perceive that some of your contributors have taken the trouble to *split spider's legs upon cart wheels*; it may therefore be as well to request that they will criticise the gist of my letter as much as they please, but that they will be a little charitably disposed towards my prosody,—the one may do good to the grand cause, while the other is a mere waste of time and paper, for you have already stated that you want ideas, not words.

In my opinion, there are two essentials wanting to the establishment of a grand National Opera, which I am sorry to feel we do not possess, and without which our efforts must be vain—I mean efficient vocalists and unity among the musicians themselves. There is not an opera extant that could be (with our present resources) performed in such a manner as to insure success; with very few exceptions indeed, we have no theatrical singers capable of giving expression either to the author's meaning, or of interesting an audience in any way whatsoever. What composer in London has not felt the lamentable truth of this? It may be answered that we have never yet had a National Opera: granted, but if we could succeed in establishing one, we should be obliged to rely upon the same performers, and our works would, consequently, be no better performed than they were at Mr. Arnold's English Opera. Let the Italian and French opera be ever so un-classical (I adopt the tone of some of your correspondents!) they have, at least, their Rubini, their Persiani, their Duprez, and their Gras Dorus, to give the most powerful effect to their operas that can be produced by singers. Who is there to give effect to our operas? How shall we gratify an audience by performance as well as composition? Is it enough to tell the public that the music is good? Assuredly no: unless you can invite the public to hear a good opera, well embodied in all respects, they will not patronize your theatre. With regard to the second essential, if the bare mention of a National Opera in your "Musical World" has called forth so much party spirit, virus, and personality as it has been my unhappy lot to read in your magazine, we are justified in concluding that, instead of uniting heart and hand in the good cause, our first meeting would be turned into a Fives' Court.

Still it would not be wise to abandon our efforts altogether; we ought rather to put *en train* some plan whereby dramatic musical performance may be nurtured and matured, we should institute a sort of nursery for operatic plants, as a stepping-stone to a grand National Opera hereafter. In one of your late leading articles you detailed a portion of a plan which I have formed (by the way I do not know how you made yourself acquainted with it), for uniting the Royal Academy of Music to a theatre to be

engaged for the purpose, partly for the object of making the rising talent of that institution available. The idea suggested itself from the Opera in Paris, which was originally formed chiefly of the members of the Conservatoire, both vocal and instrumental. The French, like us, possessed talent which had only been exercised in the Salle, but there was no grand Opera to bring it into play; at length they opened a theatre appended to the Conservatoire, in which to perfect their artists, and which to this day bears the name of the Academie Royale. The public expected but little, at first, from mere tyros, and therefore gave encouragement instead of showing severity; and I need scarcely tell your readers that this Academy is now one of the finest operas (in all its appointments) in Europe.

The singers and performers of our Royal Academy of Music, were they properly disciplined would, doubtless, in time, form a powerful operatic corps. At the same time, I do not intend that our established singers (the few we have) should remain idle, they, with the chief instrumental performers, and the composers already known, should act as leaders to the inexperienced. I shall pause here, in order that your enterprising correspondents may suggest their various improvements upon the rough outline I have offered to their consideration; should it be approved of, so far, I will forward you the particulars, subject also to their further remarks.

Before I take my leave, permit me to say, in reply to a charge brought against me (in conjunction with Messrs. Balfe and Loder) of monopolizing the theatres by means of intrigue, that I feel myself altogether undeserving such an attack. I have only produced three operas during the last seven years, and four out of the seven were spent on the continent; how could I, therefore, stand in the way of the "talent" "Aristides" speaks of? I wish all your correspondents would sign their *real names* to their communications; it would not only make them more cautious than they are at present, of what they assert, but prevent them from meanly saying, under the cover of anonymous signatures, that which they have not the courage to say openly.—I am sir, yours truly,

117, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury.

JOHN BARNETT.

To the Editor of the Musical World.

SIR—Finding that the subject of a National Opera has at length been brought into public notice, permit me, while there is so much zeal and enthusiasm evinced in the cause, to second the recommendation of "A Young Composer," that a public meeting be called, and that immediately to, by the co-operation of all those so earnest to lend their assistance, at which a committee be at once appointed, and a subscription commenced; for I feel assured if it only makes a beginning we shall not lack support. But while there are so many schemes in agitation, and such a variety of propositions put forth, I fear little will accrue from them unless something definite be concluded upon in the manner above-named, which will afford a wide field for discussion, as well as secure the tangible means by which we shall at once be able to carry one part of the object into effect.—I remain, yours truly,

A WELL-WISHER.

MUSICAL INTELLIGENCE.

FOREIGN.

PARIS.—*First representation at the Opera-Comique, of L'Opera à la Cour, music arranged by M. M. Grisar and Boieldieu, words by M. M. Scribe and St. George's.*—It was the original intention to have produced this piece for the inauguration of the new theatre; its appearance three months after the time is a sort of anachronism. The idea of placing the new theatre under the patronage of musical celebrities of all countries was a happy one, and required only a seasonable application. The object of the direction was to present to the public the different artists of the company under the most favourable aspect for each individual. The music of the old school was requisite for one, that of the new for another; a third shone conspicuous in Italian; the whole to be embodied in a drama of life and interest. Let us first see how the authors of the *libretto* have acquitted themselves. A certain German prince has a daughter, who is young, beautiful, and passionately fond of music; her day-dream of happiness is the hope of marrying a composer of genius. Three great personages are suitors for her hand, the young Prince Ernest, Count Magnus, and the Marquis de Valdemar. There is also a M. de Bamberg, tutor to the prince, and very anxious to get him married; and a M. Cornelius, professor of music to the Princess, and in

love with *Mina*, a court lady, who however prefers *M. de Bamberg*. These latter, knowing the secret aspirations of the princess, concert measures to render her favourable to *Ernest*. The plan hit on is, that *M. de Bamberg* should try to make him pass for a composer of first-rate genius, writing at least one opera every month. "What a prolific genius!" cries the *Princess*, and falls in love with him at once. She immediately bespeaks an opera from his pen, with the best part for herself, and others for *Mina*, her two admirers, and the prince himself. The prince stands aghast and mutters excuses. He has no subject; besides he could never suffer his name to be brought on the stage. The objections are instantly removed; a subject from English history is placed before him, and the opera shall appear under the name of a friend—*M. de Bamberg*. The latter expostulates; but the prince turns the tables on him, saying, "You got me into the scrape, extricate me as you can." *Bamberg* is left alone to invoke Apollo and the Muses, but finds it more convenient to lay hands on any pieces of merit that turn up, without regard to country or date; and having made a sufficient collection, brings them out as original works from his own pen. *Master Cornelius* is an old pedant, whose music sets every body asleep; but as he would have discovered the cheat, he is locked up during the performance. When liberated, however, he proclaims *ore rotundo* that the music is none of *Bamberg's*. "Parbleu!" says the latter, "I know that as well as you. It is by my young pupil, *Prince Ernest*, who has been long disseminating in all countries his immortal productions under the names of Rossini, Mozart, Meyerbeer, Auber, Halevy, Adam, Donizetti, &c. &c." But this explanation disgusts the lady's father, who will have nothing to say to a prince that writes music. "You are right," says the prince to him—"I am no more a musician than yourself." Finally the young *Princess* surmounts her repugnance to the prosaic *Ernest* and accepts his hand, while the tutor, *de Bamberg*, espouses *Mina*, who snaps her fingers at the old pedant *Cornelius*. *M. M. Grisar* and *Boieldieu* have played the part of Procrustes with a good grace; though no doubt either would have preferred writing an original opera. The introduction by *M. Grisar* is finely written, it is followed by a species of *Tarentella*, and by the air of "King Dagobert," cleverly introduced. We want space to mention all the pieces. The third act is a *pasticcio*, or medley of compositions of all times and countries. There were laid under contribution Mozart, Cherubini, Rossini, Dalayrac, Weber, Nicolo, Berton, Boieldieu, Gretry, Herold, Auber, Meyerbeer, Halevy, Onslow, Adam, Weber, Donizetti, *e tutti quanti*. The honours of the representation are due to Madame Eugénie Garcia, Chollet, Masset, and Botelli. The former was overwhelmed with wreaths and garlands; her acting was spirited and lively, and her singing admirable. Her delicate and flexible features teem with expression, and reveal a mine of intelligence and fine taste. Chollet and Masset surpassed themselves; and Botelli made a very successful *debut*. There are defects in his voice which he dissembles with much skill; altogether he may be considered as the best bass that this theatre has possessed since *Inchindi*.

MOLLE. TAGLIONI has danced at the *Académie Royale*, and appears at once to have extinguished all her competitors, and confirmed the wavering allegiance of the French public. The following rhapsody is from a journal that was erst bewailing the decay of her powers:—"Once again we have seen her—the sylph whose wings mock the gaze by their undulations! How often have we been told, 'when you see her again, the aerial spirit incarnate, you will weep for sorrow; years and northern fogs have done their work; she has been so prodigal of her grace and poetry to retain in the ecstasy of illusion the nation that has robbed us of her, that her feet can invent nothing new; her arms essay in vain their arches of chorographic harmony; her stature has lost its power of contraction and dilatation; the fire and fascination of her eye are quenched in the snows of Russia!' Simpletons that we were—we have repeated what we were told; as if any living being could yet surpass in genius the Queen of all the Sylphids! Look at her, amorously suspended over her sleeping lover! a simple motion of body, arm, foot, or eye, betrays Taglioni. Look again, as she rises, swan-like, on her white pinions! would you not say that she suffers by contact with the earth, and pants for a purer and lighter atmosphere? Will she not each moment rise and oscillate between earth and heaven? Follow her, follow her now;

she elevates herself with grace and majesty; her noiseless tread brushes the dew-drops; now with her adorable arms she forms a crown for her beaming brow; now she turns upon herself; and, as she still turns, you doubt if it is not all a dream! Who can analyze the dancing of Taglioni? to what compare it? where find a language poetical enough to express in varied terms the very essence of poetry? Taglioni is an odoriferous planet receding behind a white cloud; a divine form that presents itself to the imagination to enthrall and distract it: Taglioni is love in a blue sky; pure love, without suffering or alloy; Taglioni is an angel and a woman; we seek her—we see her—we track her steps, and, when her shadow has departed, we wish to have her again and for ever before us!"

METROPOLITAN.

MADRIGAL SOCIETY.—The last meeting of this Society was held at the Freemasons' Tavern on the 16th inst., Sir J. Rogers, Bart., in the chair. The following selection was performed:—

Almighty Father.....	Evans.
Singing alone.....	Morley.
Softly, O softly.....	Wilbye.
My mistress is as fair as fine (Oliphant).....	Bennett.
When as I glanced.....	Bennett.
Kyrie Eleison.....	Leo.
Phillis, farewell.....	Bateson.
I follow close the footing.....	Morley.
Now each creature.....	Farmer.
Sing, shepherds all.....	Nicholson.
We shepherds sing.....	Weelkes.
Within a greenwood.....	Ferretti.
Far potessio vendetta.....	Ferretti.
Sweet honey-sucking bees.....	Wilbye.
Fal la la.....	

ROYAL ACADEMY CONCERT.—The fourth and last concert of the pupils of the Royal Academy of Music was given on Saturday morning last, at the Hanover-square Rooms, and was honoured with the presence of his Royal Highness Prince Albert, who entered the director's box with Lady Burghersh shortly after its commencement. The room was filled with a highly-fashionable audience, including a vast number of the nobility. The selection performed consisted of a military overture, the composition of Lord Burghersh, an overture by H. B. Richards, and a number of vocal and instrumental pieces, which were performed in a highly creditable manner by the young and promising pupils of the establishment.

DRURY LANE THEATRE.—The Promenade Concerts which are given nightly at this establishment, under the able direction of Mr. Eliason and M. Julien, increase in attraction. Amongst the novelties announced is the performance of Lord Burghersh's *Battle Symphony*, by *one hundred and forty-one instrumentalists!*

MISCELLANEOUS.

HER MAJESTY has been graciously pleased to bestow on Mr. T. Dibdin, in addition to her most gracious approbation, the sum of five pounds for his "Hymn of Thanksgiving," adapted to music composed by Mr. C. H. Purday.

THE HEREFORD FESTIVAL.—Madame Dorus Gras, Lablache, and Miss Birch are amongst the vocal performers engaged for the forthcoming Festival, for which the most active preparations are being made.

THALBERG's father has recently died and left his son a large property; Thalberg is now at Ems, and will probably be heard no more in public.

A FESTIVAL will be given at Hull in October next, under the able direction of Sir George Smart.

MODESTY OF JOHN SEBASTIAN BACH.—John Sebastian Bach united, with his distinguished talents and science, as singular and praiseworthy a modesty. Being one day asked how he had contrived to make himself so great an organist, he

answered, "I was industrious; whoever is equally sedulous will be equally successful." And one of his pupils complaining that the exercise he had set him was too difficult, he smiled and said, "Only practise it diligently and you will play it extremely well; you have five as good fingers on each hand as I have, and nature has given me no endowments that she has not as freely bestowed upon you. Judging by myself application is everything."

NATIVE MUSIC.—(From the *American Musical Review*).—We have heard it asserted that, with the exception of the United States, the inhabitants of every other country have a style of music peculiar to themselves. We venture to predict, however, that after reading the following (from the *Boston Transcript*), no one will pretend to deny our claims to originality.

"That strain again! It had a dying fall!"

"The serenading campaign at Louisville, Kentucky, has opened with great spirit. The favourite air of the young innamorati who "fly by night," sighing beneath the casements of their lady-loves, is worthy Anacreon or Tom Moore. We publish it for the benefit of our own serenading amateurs:—

"Who dat live in dat brick house yonder?

Jang malang go lay!

Past twelve o'clock, and a starlight morning,

Jang malang go lay!

"O! I wish I was a jay bird settin' on a peach tree,

Jang malang go lay!

I could den see de girl dat I love,

Jang malang go lay!"

BEETHOVEN'S DEAFNESS.—How was it possible for me to be continually saying to people, "Speak louder; keep up your voice, for I am deaf?" Alas! how was it possible for me to submit to the continual necessity of exposing the failure of one of my faculties, which, but for mismanagement, I might have shared in common with the rest of my fellow-creatures; a faculty too, that I once possessed in the fullest perfection; indeed, in a greater degree than most of those of my own profession. In this state I remained a full half-year, when a blundering doctor persuaded me that the best thing I could do to recover my hearing would be to go into the country. Here, incited by my natural disposition, I was induced to join in the society of my neighbours. But how bitter was the mortification I experienced, when some one near me would stand listening to the notes of a flute I could not hear, or to the shepherd's song sounding from the valley, not one note of which I could distinguish! Such occurrences had the effect of driving me almost to despair, nay, even raised gloomy thoughts in my mind of seeking relief in self-destruction. It was nothing but my art that restrained me; it appeared impossible for me to quit the world till I had accomplished the objects I felt myself, as it were, destined to fulfil.

MADAME MARA.—Mr. Bacon observing, in his "Elements of Vocal Science," that it is a favourite notion of his, that the best way to begin the instruction of a singer would be to teach him to tune an instrument, or perhaps to play on the violin while the first vocal exercises were going on, tells us that his opinion was confirmed by the fact that Mme. Mara was originally taught the violin. "In a conversation," says he, "which I lately held with that lady, she fully confirmed my idea by assuring me, that had she a daughter she should learn the fiddle before she sung a note. 'For,' said Mme. Mara, 'how can you best convey a just notion of slight variations in the pitch of a note? By a fixed instrument? no. By the voice? no; but, by sliding the finger upon the string, you instantly make the most minute variation visibly as well as audibly perceptible.'"

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We have corrected, in our "List of New Publications," the works to which, last week, the name of EWER was erroneously attached, instead of WESSEL.

We had intended this week to have noticed the performance at St. Peter's Church, Cornhill, but have so much to say upon the subject, that we must defer our remarks till next week.

Several correspondents, whose letters arrived too late for notice this week, shall be attended to in our next.

E. CHAPPELL begs to announce the following new publications.—The whole of the vocal music in Mercadante's opera **IL GIURAMENTO**, and Persiani's **INEZ DI CASTRO**, as now performing with the greatest success at Her MAJESTY'S THEATRE; also the favourite airs in Books singly, and duets by **DIABELLI**. Fantasias by **CZERNY**, **BURGMÜLLER**, &c. &c.

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CHAPPELL'S COLLECTION of ENGLISH NATIONAL AIRS, consisting of ancient song, ballad, and dance tunes, interspersed with anecdote, and preceded by a History of English Minstrelsy; the airs harmonised for the pianoforte by Dr. Crotch, J. A. Wade, and G. A. Macfarren. Complete in two volumes, neatly bound, price £2 2s.

A new and complete edition of **WEBER'S WORKS**, edited by J. MOSCHELES, nos. 1 to 24.

A complete collection of **BEETHOVEN'S GRAND SYMPHONIES**, arranged as pianoforte duets, with flute, violin, and violoncello accompaniments ad lib., nos. 1 to 8. By W. WATTS.

NEW SONGS BY S. LOVER.

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She who holds my heart in keeping	2 0
The Sun-dial.....	2 0
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The Indian exile.....	2 0
The midshipman.....	2 0
The lonely harp.....	2 0
We are the wandering breezes; duet.....	2 6

SELECT LIST OF NEW SONGS

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Sister loved; 2s.....	G. Linley.
In early childhood's smiling morn; dedicated by permission to H.R.H. Prince Albert; 2s.....	H. J. St. Leger.
Dear friend of infancy; 2s.....	Idito.
The village church in yonder vale, 2s.....	J. Barnett.
O 'tis sweet through the grove; 2s.....	Idito.
The remembrance of those that are gone; 2s.....	G. A. Macfarren.
Ah, why do we love! 2s.....	Idito.
Queen of the sea; sung by Mme. Vestris; 2s.....	H. R. Bishop.
The bells, the bells of evening; sung by Mrs. Waylett; 2s.....	A. Lee.
La Notte; arietta; 2s.....	Rubini.
L'audio; melodia; 1s. 6d.....	Schubert.
Il canto delle alpi; 1s. 6d.....	Negri.
La sera d'estate; 2s.....	Idito.
Per l'aure tacite; 2s.....	Guglielmo.

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